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clauses and lines that are about as difficult to interpret as the original, for which even the brief vocabulary of "some words not commonly used now" does not always give sufficient help. On the whole, however, the translation of Morris gives the beauties of the original, and spirits the reader away to the romantic days of Hroðgar in Heorot and Hygelac in Geatland as no other modern version, now in existence, will do. The critic in the *Athenæum*¹³ says:

"We can well imagine that this translation of 'Beowulf' into rhymeless alliterative lines will seem uncouth to the general reader whose ear is familiar only with the quantitative scansion of classic movements and the accentual prosody of modern rhyme and Blank verse. But if the business of the translator of an ancient poem is to pour the old wine into the new bottles with as little loss as possible of the original aroma, Mr. Morris's efforts have been crowned with entire success. . . . So powerful is the vision at work in this glorious poem, that it seems the product not of a poetical artificer, but of Nature herself. . . . The last crowning excellence in all poetry is that it shall seem to be inspired, and one of the greatest aids to this is that the struggle between matter and form shall be so little apparent that the movement seems the inevitable outcome of him who tells the tale or sings the song."

Ragozin's *Beowulf, the Hero of the Anglo-Saxons*, is contained in the last one hundred and odd pages of the book. The story is in no sense a literal translation of the original, although the narrative is frequently interspersed with passages translated into simple, easy prose. These "Tales of the Heroic Ages" are avowedly written for the entertainment and instruction of the young, between the ages of ten and fifteen, but the *Beowulf* might be read with great interest and profit by "grown up" people; or even by students and critics of the Old English epic. The main outline and facts of the poem are given in such easy-flowing, vivacious prose, that the reader experiences in its perusal all the pleasure of a novel or fairy tale.

The interest of the story is very much increased by four splendid illustrations from the adventures of the hero, Beowulf; namely, The Death of Beowulf (Frontispiece); The Landing of Beowulf; Queen Wealhtheow Pledges Beowulf; Beowulf and the Old Wife of the Mere.

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13 August 20, 1895.

FRENCH GRAMMAR.

Grammaire historique de la langue française.

Par KR. NYROP, Professeur à l'Université de Copenhague. Tome premier. Copenhague: det Nordiske Forlag. Leipzig: Harrassowitz. Paris: A. Picard & Fils. 1899. 8vo, pp. xi, 488.

WE are at last to have a measurably complete French historical grammar written, not by a Frenchman it is true, but at least in French. If we must again postpone the realization of our hopes for Mr. Gaston Paris' *Grammaire de l'ancien Français*, which is to solve for us so many questions reserved from time to time in *Romania* for a more convenient season, we take great satisfaction in having before us the work of one of that large band of scholars who have received from him their inspiration for Romance studies.

Prof. Nyrop's grammar is a striking evidence of the constantly increasing importance which the scientific study of the Romance languages is attaining. It will be when completed by far the most compendious historical grammar of a single Romance language, this first volume containing four hundred and eighty-eight pages as against two hundred and seventy-one in the Schwan-Behrens grammar, although the latter treats phonology and morphology, while the former does not include the morphology. A comparison of Part II., 'Phonétique,' in Nyrop's work with Part I., 'Lautlehre,' of the Schwan-Behrens, which is a fairer test, shows two hundred and ninety-four and one hundred and twelve pages respectively.

The contemporary form of the language is chosen as the standpoint for considering the alteration of Latin into French. The plan may well be defended, since Modern French is for us the most important stage, and, in large measure, the cause of our interest in those which preceded; yet it may be questioned whether Old French is not the true vantage position, from which, as middle ground, we can best look back to the Latin and forward to the Modern French. No such hesitation, however, need be felt in commending the author's use, wherever practicable, of the Classic form of Latin words when citing etyma. It is true that prominence should be given to the fact that such form is frequently not the basis of the French word, and, it may here be remarked, Prof. Nyrop might to decided advantage have laid more stress on the difference between

phonetic modifications which took place in the general Folk-Latin stock and those peculiar to Gallic territory; but, nevertheless, the Classic Latin furnishes the form more familiar to the student, and if the main laws which worked in the popular speech be emphasized, he quickly learns to make for himself the most of the alterations in the correctness of which we have confidence; while the attempt to clothe every word in a Folk-Latin dress is bound to result in erroneous, and liable to result in ridiculous, forms.

Part I. of the volume, 'Histoire générale de la Langue française' treats in separate chapters the origins, the general history, and the external characteristics of the language in the Old, the Middle, the Classic, and the Modern period, and, in conclusion, the orthography. The material, wisely chosen and well arranged, is presented clearly and attractively, and forms an admirable introduction to the study of French historical grammar.

Part II., 'Phonétique,' evidences no less distinctly the author's orderly bent of mind. He has distributed his material into chapters in a form convenient for both study and reference. The chapter devoted to each vowel treats only the 'unconditioned' development of that vowel in free and in checked tonic and subtonic position. Then separate chapters are devoted to the disturbing influence of palatal consonants, labial consonants, *l*, and *r*, after which atonic vowels are grouped together. Syncope and its opposite, dieresis, hiatus, and apophony, or vowel alterations due to accent-shifting, are treated in the closing chapter on vowels. The main division of the subject of consonants is based on their mode of formation and not on their position with regard to surrounding sounds, so that the plan of arrangement employed for the vowels is reversed. The concluding chapters of the work are concerned with general phenomena disturbing the working of phonetic laws, as dittology and haplology (better known to most of us as assimilation and dissimilation), popular etymology, etc.

The bibliography of 46 pages is quite detailed, but needs to be supplemented in some cases by the use of that of Schwan-Behrens, over which, however, it takes decided precedence in convenience of arrangement. Some

of the books and articles cited might, in view of the author's 'but surtout pédagogique,' have been omitted as not calculated to add to the student's stock of accurate information. It is to be regretted that Prof. Nyrop did not adopt one of the standard systems of abbreviation for the titles of journals and collections, either that of the *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* or that of the *Kritischer Jahresbericht*, but here, and elsewhere, the book shows a tendency rather away from than toward German influences. The closing pages of the grammar contain an analytic index, and a word-index apparently complete.

There is evidence of a careful and extensive use of the valuable *Dictionnaire général* of Hatzfeld, Darmesteter, and Thomas as the chief authority in etymologies and word-forms. In fact the whole trend of the work shows the influence of the French school, the author's opinions on grammatical questions coinciding largely with those of Mr. Paris. The nature of a handbook such as that before us precludes exhaustive discussion of original views, yet there are points which are presented in a way to furnish interesting food for reflection. The absence of certain of the details of date and process of development may be justified by Prof. Nyrop's 'ordinarily excluding all doubtful opinions,' yet this test can hardly have been applied to some that are admitted. A valuable feature of the volume from the pedagogical standpoint is the fulness with which examples of learned forms are cited under each subdivision. On the other hand, a number of details given in the phonology belong more properly to morphology, and unnecessary repetition would have been avoided by reserving them for the second volume. Phonetic terminology is so complicated and conflicting that the first care should be to do nothing to add to the confusion. Why then call all syllables before the accent 'protonic' instead of, with Darmesteter and Meyer-Lübke, limiting the term to the syllable immediately preceding it? Again, does it help the already sadly befogged nomenclature of palatals to use the name 'prepalatal' for a palatal before *e*, *i*; medio-palatal for a palatal before *a*; post-palatal before *o*, *u*? Taken as a whole, however, the book is a model of clearness, showing in this one of the most salient

advantages of the influence of the *esprit français*. We have the implied promise that the succeeding volumes will treat morphology, syntax, and semantics.¹ We thank the author for the portion of the grammar which has already appeared, and shall await with eagerness the remaining parts.

A few comments on individual points are appended.

§ 20. The author makes the surprising assertion that in Old French there occur no learned adjectives or verbs. How would he explain such words as *enluminet* (Roland, l. 535), *violé* (id., 704), *penser* (id., 1472), *criminel* (id., 2456), *principal* (id., 3432), etc.? If his statement is intended to refer only to the examples he has cited, it is, to say the least, misleading.

§ III. "Si *b* devient *v* dans HIBERNUM > *hiver*, on trouvera que le même changement a eu lieu dans tous les mots où *b* se trouve dans la même situation, c. à. d. précédé et suivi d'une voyelle."

The last phrase in its present wording is incorrect. An intervocalic labial is not in the same situation when followed by a back vowel as when followed by a front vowel: cf. *TABONEM > *taon*, DEBUTUM > *deu* with DEBERE > *devoir*.

§ 113.3. *Pouvoir* < *pooir* is incorrectly cited as an example of the *development* of a new sound. It is an analogous formation; cf. *Z. R. P. XI*, pp. 538-539.

§ § 127-128, 148-149. Folk-Latin lengthening of free tonic vowels is not asserted, and by implication is rejected (cf. § 128, first sentence). Even if the author, as here indicated, follows Boehmer, a theory so generally accepted and of such basal importance as ten Brink's should at least be mentioned. As Prof. Nyrop does not draw this quantitative distinction; he naturally holds (§ 171) that *e* < free *a* was distinguished from *e* < checked *e* or < checked *e* not by its length but by its quality. He does, however, questioningly suggest (§ 181) a difference in quantity between Old-French *o* < checked *o* and *o* < free *o*.

§ 149. To state that a vowel which is followed by a single consonant, as in *NOS*, *TRES*, is in an open syllable serves, it is true,

¹ Cf. § 515, rem., § 519, rem.

as a practical rule, but misleads and confuses the student. It should be explained that a vowel in this position would be free or checked according to the nature of the initial sound of the word which follows, but that the cases where it was free prevailed over the others. This is a section in which the author is forced to choose between conflicting theories and his choice is to consider that *cr* and mute-*l* constituted checked position. He avoids the further problem that is offered by *poële*, *PENSILE*, by omitting the word altogether.

§ 164. It is surprising to see it suggested in explanation of the diphthongization of the vowel in *vieil*, *siècle* that the date of the fall of the *u* in *vetulum*, *sæculum*, was later than the diphthongization of *e*. From the days of Schuchardt's *Vokalismus* on, no one has questioned the antiquity of the absence of the *u* in the combinations *cûl*, *tûl*. Farther on in the same section *MELIUS* and *VENIAM* are given as examples of words having a checked tonic vowel (cf. also § 207). While it is customary to consider *ly* and *ny* as checking combinations, yet to do so raises serious problems, both because of the history of preceding *e* and *o* and because of the early passage of *ly*, *ny* to *monillé* *l*, *n*. Prof. Matzke's view² accords better with the principles of syllable division.

§ 183. The suggestion that the passage of free *o* to *ö*, instead of being similar to that of *e* to *oi*, resembles that of *u* to *ü* is interesting, and at least worthy of further investigation.

§ 214, *cas isolés*. *Moindre* is erroneously treated as having a checked tonic vowel.

§ 231. The sub-heads are incorrectly numbered.

§ § 209-232. The chapter on nasals is well arranged and very clear. The author follows Mr. Paris' theory, accepting the preservation of all nasal consonants in Old-French pronunciation (§ 332) and rejecting the nasalization of any vowels except *a* and *e*. The only qualification he makes is in § 213 (cf. also § 218), where he says: "La nasalization (of *i* in *in*), si elle a existé, a été très peu sensible": but cf. § 225: *Tout o devant une nasale était fermé et oral*, and § 227: "Au moyen âge *bruns* et *nus* assonaient avec *plus*, *fut*, *vertut* . . . : donc, *u*

² *Publications of the Mod. Lang. Association*, vol. xiii, pp. 27-31.

était plutôt oral." The arguments of Herzog³ for the pre-literary disappearance of nasal consonants when in the same syllable as the preceding vowel, and therefore for the nasalization of all vowels in Old-French, have brought new and important support to the theory of Prof. Suchier, which should by all means be mentioned.

§ 250. To consider mute *e* in final syllables a supporting vowel in all cases in which it does not represent Latin *a* is not satisfactory, as Prof. Meyer-Lübke⁴ has pointed out.

§ 253 (p. 210, last line). Mute *e* in Modern French 'ne s'entend jamais en prose dans les mots isolés ou avant une pause.' Probably *que* is omitted after *prose*, but in any event the statement is too sweeping.

§ 261,3. So far as the history of the language as shown by its monuments is concerned, *co*, *cest*, etc., are as old as *iço*, *icest*. Why not explain the one set as tonic, the other as atonic forms?

§ 348,2. What indications are there that double *l* and simple *l* had different values in Old-French pronunciation? Again, the assertion is made in § 466 that the writing *ss* denoted a true double consonant in Old-French. It is probable that its meaning as a graphic sign was the same then as it is now.

§ 371, *cas isolés*. The fall of *þ* in **SAPUTUM* is rightly classed as not phonetic, but attention might have been called to **HABUTUM* > *ëu* as having caused the fall of the consonant in *seu*.

§ 378. The author adopts the view of Prof. Thurneysen that the point of departure for the loss of the *þ* in the Imperfect was *HABEBAM*, *DEBEBAM*, in which the *þ* fell by dissimilation. This does not seem, as an unsupported explanation, sufficient. Prof. Lindsay's suggestions of proportional analogy to the Future is worthy of consideration. In early Latin-*ibo* is found by the side of *-iam* in the Future of IV, and *-ebo* by the side of *-am* in the Future of III. Thus, as the Future had forms with and without *þ*, the Folk-Latin Imperfect may have had a form without *þ* parallel to the form with *þ*.

§ § 471, 208. The *Pal. + a* theory of the

³ *Z. R. P.*, vol. xxii (1898), pp. 536-542.

⁴ *Z. F. S. L.*, vol. xv, part 2, pp. 90-91. Cf. also Rydberg, *Die Entstehung des s-Lauts*, Upsala, 1896, p. 46; Staaf, *Revue de Philologie française et de Lit.*, vol. xi (1897), pp. 27-31.

⁵ *The Latin Language*. By W. M. Lindsay, Oxford, 1894, 8. p. 493, § 37.

development of *-ARIUM* is adopted, but without comment or exposition. In § 208 the student may be in doubt whether *-ier* represents the uniform development of *ry* or not, while the statement in § 471 that *ry* 'se combine en un *r* mouillé, qui se résout en *ir*,' with the citation side by side, in illustration, of *PARIA* > *paire*, *-ARIUM* > *-ier*, is most confusing. *-ARIUM* might have at least been put down as a '*cas isolé*.'

§ 400, 2, *rem*. If the developement of words in *-ICUS* is 'peu clair,' the difficulty does not lie in the contrast shown in the two sets of words given, for this is due to the *t* of the first set being in weak, and the *t* of the second in strong position.

P. 406. For 415 read 451.

In the sections called '*cas isolés*' more suggestions as to the cause of the variations from regular development might easily be given and would be servicable to the beginner. Some examples of this lack have already been mentioned, and a few others will be added here. The list could be extended. § 379,2. The student should note that in *coulon*, *plon* the *þ* which fell was final and followed an *m*. § 382,2. A beginner might not see the bearing upon these words of the late fall of protonic vowels or of the preceding sonorous consonants. The same explanation is needed also in § 400, 2; § 401, 2; § 403, 2, *cas isolés*. The cases in the sections cited might have been contrasted with those in § 390, *cas isolés*, in order to bring out the fact that, for a consonant resulting from the fusion of a secondary combination there is regressive assimilation in place of formation, progressive in mode of formation.

§ 399, *cas isolés*. The words in which *cr* > *gr* all have *cra*. § 399, *rem*. The difference in time between the reduction of *qu* to *k* in *quand* and *quinze* is not mentioned, and attention might have been called to the cause of the reduction in *QUINQUE*, etc.

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GERMAN LITERATURE.

Lessing's Minna von Barnhelm, edited with an Introduction and Notes by A. B. NICHOLS. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1898.

THIS text-book, which comes from its publishers as a most attractive and handy little